1887.

Legislative Council

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ANNUAL REPORT

ON

INDIAN IMMIGRATION TO AND IN THE COLONY

FOR THE YEAR

1886.

LAID ON THE TABLE,
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1887

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INDIAN IMMIGRATION.

(REPORT FOR 1886)

THE AGENT-GENERAL OF IMMIGRATION TO THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY

Immigration Office,

Sir, Suva, 6th October, 1887

I have the honour to submit, for the information of His Excellency the Governor, the following Report on Indian Immigration for the year 1886

Applications

1 Applications were received and fees paid, in 1885, for the introduction of 980 Indian immigrants, under the provisions of Ordinance XIII of 1882, from the undermentioned employers, the application fee being £6

(1) New Zealand Sugar Company, Limited	500
(2) Colonial Sugar Refining Company	350
(3) Mago Island Company	100
(4) Walter Hunter	30
Total	980

Voyage and arrival

2 To satisfy the above applications there were recruited and despatched from India 896 adults, 67 children, and 19 infants

The following Table shows the duration of the voyage, the number of births and deaths at sea, those landed at the Dépôt at Nukulau, and such as were admitted to the Depôt Hospital on arrival

TABLE

TABLE showing the number of Indian Emigrants embarked at Calcutta and landed at Fiji, the Births and Deaths on the voyage, and those sent to Dépôt Hospital on arrival, during the season 1886.

Vessels.	Tonnage.	Date of Embarkation.	Date of Arrival.	Duration of Voyage. Number of days at Sea.	Number of days between Embarkation and Debarkation.	Embarked. Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Infants.	Total.	Died at Sea. Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Infants.	Total.	Drowned during Voyage. Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Infants.	Total.	Births at Sea.	Landed at Fiji. Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Infants.	Total.	Sent to Dépôt Hospital. Men.	Women.	Boys.	Girls.	Infants.	Total.
Boyne	1,335	13 2/86	26 4 86	70	73	342	137	28	14	28	549	4	2	2	.	10	18	1		...	..	...	1	6	337	135	26	14	24	536	1	6	...	..	4	11
The Bruce .	1,146	13 3 86	21/5 86	67	70	296	121	11	14	21	463	1	1	...	..	5	7		..	...	...	..	...	2	295	120	11	14	18	458	4	2	...	..	1	7
						638	258	39	28	49	1,012	5	3	2		15	25	1	...	...	..	...	1	8	632	255	37	28	42	994	5	8			5	18

3. No cases of cholera occurred on board either of the vessels conveying Indian emigrants to Fiji during the year.

The passages made by the "Boyne" and the "Bruce" were of average length; and the mortality at sea was low, though a trifle higher than 1·58 *per centum*, the rate exhibited by the "Main" and "Ganges," arriving in 1885.

MORTALITY during Voyage.

Name of Vessel	Surgeon Superintendent	Length of Voyage in Days	Number embarked	Births	Total	Deaths	Rate of Mortality *per centum*
Boyne	F M Laing	73	549	6	555	19	3 42
Bruce	F Hasard	70	463	2	465	7	1 50
		Totals			1,020	26	
		Mean					2 54

4 The general physique of immigrants, ex "Boyne," is reported by the Medical Inspector as above the average; that of immigrants, ex "Bruce," as good, though not equal to that of the former vessel.

5. One immigrant was rejected as unfit for indenture in the case of the "Boyne" and one in the case of the "Bruce." The Mago Island Company, who had applied for 100 Indian immigrants, withdrew their application, and an application for two immigrants was received and accepted, after the legal date, from the Fiji Sugar Company. The distribution of Indian immigrants during 1886 was effected as follows:— Allotment and distribution

The Indian immigrants arriving in 1886 were allotted as follows:—

Allottee	"Boyne" Adults allotted: At Actual Cost of Introduction.	"Boyne" Adults allotted: At Half Rate	"Boyne" Adults allotted: Free of Charge	"Boyne" Adults allotted: Total	The "Bruce" Adults allotted: At Actual Cost of Introduction.	The "Bruce" Adults allotted: At Half Rate	The "Bruce" Adults allotted: Free of Charge	The "Bruce" Adults allotted: Total.	Total Adults allotted: At Actual Cost	Total Adults allotted: At Half Rate	Total Adults allotted: Free of Charge	Total Number of Adults allotted during the Year	Remarks
Colonial Sugar Refining Company Rewa	301			301	51			51	352			352	
New Zealand Sugar Company, Limited, Ba	140			140	359	1	1	361	499	1	1	501	
W Hunter, Oseso	30			30	*1			*1	31			31	*This man has not heretofore been taken into account as an allotted immigrant. He was medically rejected at first, and was not allotted until 3 months afterwards
Jas Murray, Tamanua					2			2	2			2	
	471			471	413	1	1	415	884	1	1	886	

6 One Indian emigrant was landed from the "Boyne" whose name did not appear on the nominal roll of the ship, and whose appearance does not seem to have been

been noted by the Surgeon-Superintendent The circumstances of the case were reported to the agent for this Colony at Calcutta

Proportion of the sexes

7 The following Table gives the proportion *per centum* of females to males in the case of adult immigrants, and that of all ages, introduced by the "Boyne" and "Bruce" —

Vessel	Adults only		Rate per centum Adults	Children and Infants		Rate of all sexes per centum
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Boyne	337	135	40 00	39	25	42 55
Bruce	295	120	40 67	20	23	45 39

The proportion *per centum* of the adult female immigrants introduced into the Colony to males is 42 19, and the proportion *per centum* of females to males, including infants and children, 43 79

8 A very general desire was evinced by employers of Indian immigrants in this Colony to procure a reduction in the prescribed proportion of females to males despatched to the Colony from India The difficulty generally experienced in obtaining female recruits in India, the small amount of work that can be performed by females in comparison with males owing to inferior physique and causes common to women, and the equality of the cost of introduction of males and females, furnish cogent reasons for the desire to obtain a reduction Many of the female adults introduced into the Colony are of such a low class that they form by no means desirable colonists The inducements to quit Fiji offered by the neighbouring colonies will probably, prove more attractive to male Indian immigrants than females, consequently one may expect that the proportion of females to males will show a tendency to increase rather than decrease

Owing to the depressed condition of the sugar market, employers are striving to lessen the cost of production, and a reduction in the prescribed proportion of females to males would be a boon to the masters without danger of prejudice to the social condition of immigrants in the Colony

Re-emigration

9 The number of immigrants introduced during the year who had previously emigrated to this and other colonies was 58

Indenture of immigrants to mill or instead of plantations

10 The total number of employers having Indian immigrants indentured to them was, on the 31st December, twenty The immigrants allotted to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, ex "Boyne" and "Bruce," were indentured, this year, not to the plantation on which they were to serve, but to all the plantations belonging to the Company situated on the Rewa River By this means the manager is at liberty to change the residence of any immigrant from one plantation to another, as may be most convenient, according to pressure or scarcity of work It had hitherto been customary to permit of immigrants being transferred from one plantation to another as the exigencies of the occasion might require Such transfers were of a temporary nature only, and the immigrant's consent thereto was by law required It was found however, that the penalties for breaches of the labour laws could not

be

be enforced when immigrants were so transferred, consequently the above concession was sought and sanctioned as a tentative measure only.

11 The following is a list of indentured Indian immigrants in the Colony on the 31st December, 1886, and the names of the estates on which they are respectively employed:—

INDIAN Immigrants and Estates employing them under Indenture on 31st December, 1886.

	Estate		Immigrants Introduced						Born in Fiji — Infants.			Total	Deaths.	Mortality per centum.
			M	W	B	G	I	Total.	M	F	Total			
1	Colonial Sugar Refining Co, Rewa	Vucimaca	121	47	11	1	4	184	6	6	12	196	11	
	Do do	Nausori	414	159	20	23	18	643	13	10	23	666	21	
	Do do	Navuso	212	87	33	20	14	366	10	2	12	378	8	
	Do do	Nakoroqaqa	57	20	4	3	2	86	1		1	87	4	
	Do do	Naitasiri	181	75	14	6	4	280	7	8	15	295	15	
	Do do	Viria	89	32	4	3	5	133	6	3	9	142	8	
	Do do	"Boyne" and "Bruce"	249	95	13	10	14	381				381	17	4 91
2	Rewa Sugar Co	Koronivia	242	92	19	16	11	380	2	4	6	386	19	
	Do	Ulumalia	20	7	1		1	29				29	4	5 54
3	J C Smith	Baulevu	97	38	5	2	2	144	9	16	25	169	16	9 46
4	Wm Orr	Viti	42	16	2			60		1	1	61	4	7 84
5	C L Sahl & Co	Muanawemi	76	32	5	1	3	117	3	8	11	128	10	7 81
6	F Harley	Vunaibeibi	8	5	2		1	16	1		1	17	1	5 88
7	Fiji Sugar Co	Tamanua	341	131	34	24	10	540	6	3	11	551	23	4 17
8	Deuba Estate Sugar Co	Deuba	141	60	9	4	5	219	4	5	9	228	23	10 00
9	New Zealand Sugar Co, Ba	Rarawai	574	228	52	33	30	917	17	13	30	947	96	10 13
10	C B Chalmers	Penang	31	13	1	1	2	48				48	3	6 25
11	Mortgage & Agency Co	Ellington	50	19	2	4	2	77				77	2	2 59
12	Tavuni Sugar Co	Holmhurst	145	48	22	12	8	235	6	2	8	243	3	1 23
13	N Z Loan and Mercantile Agency Co	Ososo	43	17	3	2	3	68				68	1	1 47
14	Jas R Mason	Alpha	18	8	2	3		31				31	2	6 45
15	Rabi Plantation Co	Rabi	29	10	2	1		42	5	8	13	55	3	5 45
16	Mago Island Co	Mago	22	9	1	1		33		1	1	34	0	*nil*
17	F W Armstrong	Muamkan	8	3				11				11	0	*nil*
18	Town Board	Suva	9	3				12				12	0	*nil*
19	Geo Smith	Levuka	1	1				2				2	0	*nil*
20	Lighthouse Colonial Government	Nasilai	4	1				5				5	0	*nil*
	Total		3,214	1,256	270	170	139	5,049	98	90	188	5,237	294	5 61

12. The mean death-rate amongst indentured immigrants and their children was, as may be seen by the preceding tabular statement, 5 61 *per centum*. In 1885 the rate was 4·17 *per centum*, and in 1884, 5·00. The mortality amongst indentured adults only was 4·60 *per centum* during the year, the rate amongst female and male adults being almost equal. Mortality amongst indentured Indian immigrants and their children.

13. The number of infants surviving from 1885 was 62 males and 79 females, and the number born in 1886 was 62 males and 34 females, giving a total of 237, amongst whom there were 49 deaths, exhibiting an infantile mortality at the rate of 20·67 *per centum*. The rate of mortality amongst indentured adults is high, 5·61 *per centum*, as compared with that of Demerara, viz., 2·07 *per centum*. Births, and mortality amongst infants

14. The death-rate amongst infants appears excessive, 20 67 *per centum*. It is probable that all the deaths amongst infants have been reported, and the registration of births has been neglected; but even if some allowance be made for this, the infantile mortality is still too high.

The

The death-rate amongst infant Fijians during 1886, as supplied by the Secretary for Native Affairs, was 22 62 *per centum* in the case of infants over one month and under one year, and 14 65 for infants under one month

15 The Acting Agent-General of Immigration in his report for 1885 called attention to the high rate of mortality prevailing amongst Indian infants born in the Colony, and recommended, in a separate report, that a daily ration of milk should be supplied by every manager of a plantation to any child under five years of age

The present state of affairs is highly unsatisfactory, and it is probable that it might be considerably ameliorated if regulations were framed controlling the period for which female Indian immigrants can be required to work before and after childbirth, and admitting of a certain temporary allowance of milk or other food being furnished to mothers, whose husbands are unable to earn the minimum statutory daily wage

Causes of death

16 The subjoined Table gives a brief summary of the diseases occasioning the majority of deaths amongst indentured immigrants and their children

Diseases of Respiratory Organs	Dysentery	Diarrhœa	Fevers and Eruptive Diseases	Anæmia and Debility	Accidents and Violence	Suicide	Other causes
26	95	56	7	77	16	5	72

Cost of introduction up to arrival in Colony

17 The cost of recruiting the total number of immigrants allotted in 1886 was, up to date of arrival, about £4 11s 3d per statute adult, and the cost of transport of same from Calcutta to Fiji, and other expenses contingent thereto, was about £12 12s, giving an approximate total cost of £17 3s 3d

Work and wages

18 Owing to the reduction in the staff of the Department, which took place in 1887, it has been found impossible to give any comparative statement of the wages and attendance of Indians throughout the Colony, and the manner in which the estate records are kept render it very difficult to say, for certain, how much of the non-attendance or absence from work is due to the non-completion of work and how much to absence by permission

19 An immigrant is often found marked in the estate records as absent from work when he was present in the field but did not complete a task A record of the number of days on which immigrants are permitted to absent themselves by permission is seldom available for the use of the inspector when compiling returns of earnings of indentured immigrants By section 77 of Ordinance No VI of 1878, it is enacted that it is unlawful for an employer to grant any indentured immigrant leave to absent himself from the plantation for more than thirty days in one and the same year The employer may, however, give an immigrant permission to absent himself from work for any number of days, and such permission is frequently given, and such absence by permission is not usually distinguishable from illegal absence by inspection of plantation records

20 The following Tables have been prepared by Mr Sub-Agent Foster, and show the average daily wages earned on two plantations in the Rewa District, during

during the months of March, June, September, and December, by Indian immigrants indentured thereto. The cultivation on both is sugar-cane, and the wages of sirdars, cooks, hospital attendants, watchmen, domestic servants, horseboys, and the earnings of immigrants who are unindentured are not taken into account; Saturdays have been reckoned as half-days, and authorised holidays and Sundays are omitted.

There is very little difference between the wages earned on both estates, and neither can be said to present a highly satisfactory condition of affairs, as the percentage of males and females earning over and above the minimum statutory wage allowed by law is small, and the general average low. The attendance table subjoined to each abstract of wages indicates, with such reservations as are mentioned in paragraph 19, to what extent the earnings have been affected by unwillingness or inability of Indians under indenture to profit by the work allotted them.

23. Wages earned during Four Months of the year by ordinary Field and Mill hands employed on Koronovia, an estate owned by the Rewa Sugar Company, and employing on the 20th of August, 1887, 334 adult Indian Immigrants and 81 Polynesian Immigrants.

Month.	Number of Working Days.	Males whose individual Earnings averaged								Females whose individual Earnings averaged								General Daily Average of								General Average Daily Earnings for the whole period of Four Months.		
		1s. per diem and over.		8d. per diem and over.		Less than 8d. per diem.				9d. per diem and over.		5d. per diem and over.		Less than 5d. per diem.				Males.				Females.						
						Non-workers included.		Non-workers excluded.						Non-workers included.		Non-workers excluded.		Non-workers included.		Non-workers excluded.		Non-workers included.		Non-workers excluded.			Non-workers.	
		Number of males.	Average per diem.	Number of males.	Average per diem.	Number of males.	Average per diem.	Number of males.	Average per diem.	Number of females.	Average per diem.	Number of females.	Average per diem.	Number of females.	Average per diem.	Number of females.	Average per diem.	Number of males.	Daily average.	Number of males.	Daily average.	Number of females.	Daily average.	Number of females.	Daily average.	Sex.	Included.	Excluded.
March ...	25	12	13·62	45	9·64	175	3·49	131	4·65	2	9·36	15	5·71	75	2·33	57	2·99	232	5·20	188	6·42	92	3	74	3·77	Males ...	6·71	7·56
June	24	12	12·76	94	10	122	4·29	93	5·62	2	9·75	33	6·36	56	2·69	43	3·51	228	7·08	199	8·12	91	4·28	78	4·93	...	...	...
September ...	24	12	12·55	83	9·66	130	5·30	121	5·69	...	...	41	5·95	50	2·59	38	3·41	225	7·29	216	7·60	91	4·21	79	4·85	Females	3·49	3·97
December, Field	24½	24	13·42	66	9·39	74	4·03	62	4·78	...	...	6	6·70	85	2·02	73	2·36	164	7·65	152	8·20	91	2·33	79	2·69	...	...	...
Do., Mill	24½	32	14·48	27	10·46	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

24. Average number of days worked on, and lost through sickness, by ordinary Field and Mill hands indentured to serve on Koronovia during a period similar to that for which the average earnings of Indian Immigrants have previously been given.

Month.	Number of Working Days in month.	Polynesian Adults. Average number of Immigrants.	Polynesian Adults. Average number of Days Worked on by each.	Polynesian Adults. Lost by each by Hospital.	Polynesian Adults. Lost by each by Absence.	Polynesian Adults. Lost by each by Bad weather.	Indian Male Adults. Average number of Immigrants.	Indian Male Adults. Average number of Days Worked on by each.	Indian Male Adults. Lost by each by Hospital.	Indian Male Adults. Lost by each by Gaol.	Indian Male Adults. Lost by each by Absence.	Indian Male Adults. Lost by each by Bad weather.	Indian Male Adults. Lost by each by Holiday.	Indian Male Adults. Lost by each by Court.	Indian Female Adults. Average number of Immigrants.	Indian Female Adults. Average number of Days Worked on by each.	Indian Female Adults. Lost by each by Hospital.	Indian Female Adults. Lost by each by Gaol.	Indian Female Adults. Lost by each by Absence.	Indian Female Adults. Lost by each by Bad weather.	Indian Female Adults. Lost by each by Pregnant or Nursing.	Indian Female Adults. Lost by each by Holiday.	Indian Female Adults. Lost by each by Court.
March	25	48	21·90	2	1·0	1	232	16·06	3·13	3·42	1·72	·67	.	.	92	15·44	2·11	.	1·60	·75	5·10		
June	24	58	22·47	1·17	0·6	.	228	19·12	1·11	2·70	1·04			·03	91	17·28	·86		1·24	...	4·62		
September	24	59·37	22·65	1·25	1·0		225	19·96	·77	·52	·78	.	1·91	·06	91	16·52	1·03	. .	·99		3·51	1·71	·24
December, Field	24½	68·75	22·44	1·36	·70		164	·20	1·07	1·93	1·40	.	.	·10	91	18·48	1·17	·13	2·00		2·55		·11
Do. Mill							59	23·35	·40	..	·72	.	...	·03	. .								

Whole period of Four Months. Percentages. Analysis of Work and Absence	Polynesians	Indian males	Indian females.
At work	91·86	76·63	69·44
In hospital	6·16	6·42	5·32
In Gaol		5·90	·13
Absent	1·15	5·04	6·04
Deterred by bad weather	·83	·75	·78
Pregnant			16·18
Holiday	.	2·08	1·75
Summoned to Court		·18	·36

25. The absence from work on the Vucimaca plantation is very conspicuous, viz., 22·91 *per centum* in the case of males, and 28·70 in that of females. The scope and meaning of the word 'absent,' on this estate, appears to be somewhat uncertain. On the Koronivia plantation the absence from work is 5·04 *per centum* in the case of males, and 6·04 in that of females. The records on this estate are reported as being kept in a careful and reliable manner.

It is worthy of note, that one of the principal reasons advanced for the necessity of more stringent legislation with respect of absence from work was a representation from the manager of the Koronivia plantation, in March, 1886, that during the month of February, in that year, he had lost about 35 per cent. of the days on which he might have expected work from his immigrants by their unwillingness to work. In the month of March of the same year, the Sub-Agent's return of work and absence shows an absence from work without cause of 1·72 of the working days of that month for males, and a general absence without cause for the four months of 5·04.

26. To show that an immigrant is not absent from work is no proof that he performed the amount of work expected of him; and to demonstrate that the amount of work expected of him was not performed is not necessarily a just standard by which to measure his general conduct.

Weather

27. During a considerable portion of the earlier months of the year, in this Colony, the weather is so bad that tasks, which might be light in the dry season, can with difficulty be performed. The immigrant cannot earn good wages under such conditions, and the employer finds labour less remunerative than at other times of year.

28. Very large sums have been amassed by sirdars and other immigrants placed in positions of authority. As the pressure of financial difficulties of estates increases, the tendency is to increase the number and responsibility of such employés. Earnings such as these do not furnish a trustworthy indication of the condition of Indian immigrants, consequently they have been purposely omitted in the wages' table.

Payment for unfinished tasks

29. One question relative to wages came into prominence during the latter part of the year, whether an immigrant should receive any wages for an unfinished task. The equitable view of the case would apparently favour the assumption that the immigrant should receive the *quantum meruit*, whatever that might be. The legal opinion, however, inclined to regard the non-accomplishment of the task as a breach of contract, and to debar the labourer from any claim for recompense.

30. Amongst every ship's complement of Indians introduced into the Colony there will be a certain number who will seldom accomplish in one day the task that might be expected from an ordinary able-bodied adult immigrant. Such an immigrant is liable to forfeiture of any or all wages that his employer may see fit to deduct if the latter view, set forth in the next preceding paragraph, be correct.

31. Manual labour cannot be regulated or assessed with that preciseness which is possible in the case of machinery; and, whether carelessness or indifference be the cause, the fact remains that cases were brought to notice, and more possibly escaped notice, in which immigrants were committed to prison for

the

the non-performance of acts that they were not capable of performing, and in one or more instances the condition of immigrants was found to be such, on entering gaol, as to necessitate their speedy relegation to hospital.

Inspection

32. The condition of Indian Immigration may be fairly gauged by the wages that field-hands are able to earn, and the earnings depend on the magnitude of tasks and the willingness and capacity of the immigrant for work. In paragraph 22 of the Indian Report for 1883, and in other reports, a tendency has been noticed to establish a scale of tasks more in accordance with the capabilities of picked workmen than the six hours' steady work of an ordinary able-bodied labourer. Owing to the reduction of the staff of the Department in 1887, and the undue share of time claimed by the cumbersome system of Polynesian Immigration still in vogue, the data at the command of the Agent-General of Immigration are of a more scanty and less comprehensive nature than is usually the case. The reductions are necessitated by the rapid decrease in the revenue of the Colony, and are to be regretted from an Immigration point of view, as colonial financial difficulties are more likely to increase than decrease the duties of a department entrusted with the supervision of immigrants,—a class commonly subjected to the stringent obligations attendant upon service under indenture.

Indian immigration population

33 The Indian immigrant population of the Colony, according to the definition of the term as laid down in Ordinance No. VI of 1878, numbered on the last day of December, 6,031 souls. It is probable that the return is not absolutely correct, owing to the neglect, for various reasons, on the part of employers to furnish the necessary particulars with regard to deaths.

34. The following Statement represents the Indian immigrant population of the Colony on the last day of December, 1886, according to returns received in the office up to October, 1887, and does not include probably all the Deaths or Births for the year 1886.

Year	Introduced	Births	Total	Passports	Deaths	Percentage	Remaining in the Colony at end of Year
1879	480	1	481		17	3 53	464
1880		30	494		17	3 44	477
1881		12	489	2	13	2 65	474
1882	908	39	1,421	4	31	2 18	1,386
1883	992	33	2,411	1	102	4 23	2,308
1884	1,977	67	4,352		200	4 59	4,152
1885	1,246	78	5,476	10*	223	4 07	5,243
1886	994	105†	6,342	8‡	300†	4 73	6,034

* Sent home by P & O Co's steamer 'Rosetta' † Including all indentured and unindentured immigrants
‡ Sent home in "Boyne"

Complaints of immigrants v employers and *vice versa*

35. The following Tables give the number of complaints preferred under the Immigration and other laws in 1886 by employers and indentured immigrants, and the mode in which they were dealt with. It may be seen in the case of Immigrants *v* Employers that the only cases that came to a hearing were for assault and battery with the exception of a single instance. Whether all have been reported or not it is difficult to say. Taking the indentured Indian immigrant population at 5,237 souls, the proportion per cent. of complaints to population would be about ·57, a similar

similar proportion in the case of complaints of employers would give a percentage of 169 04 a condition of matters apparently without a parallel in any Colony concerning which we possess information

IMMIGRANTS *v.* Employers

District	Offences against Immigration Laws			Other Offences		Results			
	Withholding Wages.	Overtasking	Enforcing Work beyond Legal Hours	Assault and Battery	Miscellaneous	Withdrawn	Dismissed	Convicted	Total number of Complaints
Rewa				25	1	...	16	10	26
Ba			No Return						
Navua and Serua			No Return						
Tailevu and Ra			No Return						
Taviuni				4			2	2	4
Lau			No Return						
Town of Suva			No Return						
Total				29	1		18	12	30

Employers *v.* Immigrants.

Province	Offences against Immigration Laws.												Other Offences.		Results.								
	Desertion.	Unlawful Absence.	Refusal to Work.	Want of ordinary Diligence, &c.	Disorderly Conduct or Abusive Language.	Inciting others to Desist from Work.	Causing Damage wantonly to, or using Property of Employer.	Committing a Nuisance.	Disorderly Conduct in Hospital.	Selling Rations supplied by Employer.	Buying Rations supplied by Employer.	Unlawfully Harbouring Indentured Indian Immigrant.	Assault and Battery.	Larceny.	Withdrawn.	Dismissed.	Convicted.	Remanded.	Adjourned.	Ordered to Return to Plantation.	Ordered to Hospital.	Total.
Rewa	233	5,702	19	568	30	20	6	4	6	...	...	...	...	8	848	507	4,692	...	...	549	...	6,596
Ba	30	1,027	4	422	5	2	2	3	36	1	1	...	...	...	...	107	1,393	3	...	26	4	1,533
Navua and Serua ...	1	210	8	32	6	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	19	6	26	29	229	...	...	...	...	284
Taviuni	6	46	20	11	7	1	3	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	3	11	85	...	1	...	...	100
Tailevu and Ra ...	2	99	1	125	16	3	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	51	199	...	...	...	...	250
Lau	...	5	...	42	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	3	...	1	2	52	...	...	...	...	55
Town of Suva ...	...	32	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	35	...	...	...	...	35
Totals ...	272	7,121	52	1,200	70	26	15	10	49	1	1	...	22	14	878	707	6,685	3	1	575	4	8,853

Delivery from gaol one great cause of irregularity at work

36. By Ordinance No. VI of 1878, section 100, it was enacted that, on the release from prison, an indentured immigrant should be handed over to the employer or servant of the plantation to which he or she belonged, instead of being reconveyed to the plantation as in the Ordinance relating to immigration in Demerara, No. VII, 1873, section 87. The employer generally declined to send to the gaol for his immigrant, and the Government had no provision whereby they could reconvey immigrants to plantations, consequently the prisoners, who naturally belonged to the least willing or capable section of the indentured community, occupied a considerable time in reconveying themselves to their plantations. This condition of matters was particularly objectionable in the case of females. Destitute of food and lodging they resorted to houses of questionable character in the township of Suva for maintenance Some of the prisoners came from plantations situated at a great distance from Suva, and in more than one instance it is probable the return journey to the plantation occupied several weeks.

Legislation affecting Indian immigration in 1886

37. The principal legislative changes made during the year were—

Ord VIII of 1886

(1) Ordinance No. VIII of 1886, an Act whereby the right to commute was restored to such Indian immigrants as might have been recruited on the understanding that they would be allowed to terminate their period of indentured service, under certain conditions, by payment of money.

Ord XI of 1886

(2) Ordinance No XI of 1886, by provisions of which the growth and use of ganja were prohibited. The Acting Agent-General of Immigration, in an interesting paper on the subject of the introduction of ganja into this Colony, traces the earliest evidences of the cultivation of the hemp plant to the year 1882, the seeds having been brought to the Colony in the "Berar" or "Poonah," vessels conveying Indian immigrants to this Colony during that year. Some hemp plants, raised from this seed, are said to have fetched as much as £3 apiece The cultivation of the plant steadily increased, until it was to be found in nearly every district in which coolies were employed. The native Fijians began to take to it, and the work of plantation hands was considered to be affected by the abuse of it.

Ord XIV of 1886

(3) Ordinance XIV of 1886 was principally enacted with a view to increasing the penalties provided under the Principal Ordinance for the non-fulfilment of, and absence from, work. By the Principal Ordinance, under which the immigrants serving in the Colony were introduced, the penalty for absence from or refusal to work, or non-completion of work, without lawful excuse, was a fine of 3s , or imprisonment in default for seven days, with an extension of one day for each day's absence and each day for which a committal to prison was ordered. The punishment for desertion was £1, or imprisonment for a period not exceeding two months in default of payment, with the similar extension of time to that attendant upon absence from work. Under the new Ordinance the orders for extension of time remain the same, and a fine of 3s. per diem for lost time, or imprisonment for

three months in default of payment, became the penalty for absence from work, and the employer could either prosecute for a single offence or allow the laches for one week to accumulate and be dealt with under an information. A further penalty was provided on a third conviction, when an immigrant became liable to imprisonment without option of a fine for any term not exceeding six months. No reservation as to the interval between the commission of the offences was provided. Consequently an immigrant who had been three times convicted of absence in his first year remained liable to the extreme penalty to the end of his indenture The penalty for absence from work became under this Ordinance more heavy than those for desertion or absence from the plantation without leave for more than five days. Other provisions of a restrictive character were enacted by this Ordinance, whereby it became illegal for more than five immigrants to absent themselves from their plantations, without leave, for the purpose of making a complaint, for immigrants to carry weapons when making requests to their employers, magistrates, or other public officers: the careless use of fire was provided against, and the sale and use of opium.

Crime

38. There were fifty-two charges brought before the Supreme Court in the case of thirty-five defendants, Indian immigrants, resulting in seven acquittals and forty-five convictions. Several charges, in certain cases, were brought against one defendant. Twenty-four charges were for murder, attempt at murder, or wounding with intent to kill, three for wounding with intent to do grevious bodily harm; three for robbery with violence; one for rape; and one for house-breaking; and two for perjury.

Immigrants exercising trades and paying licenses

39 The following licenses were issued at different times of year to Indian immigrants.—

Hawkers	21
Bakers	5
Retail Stores .	21
Coasting Licenses	12
Dog Licenses	6
Gun Licenses	5

Immigrants' savings

40. Immigrants' savings to the extent of £3,752 11s 2d. were deposited in the Bank of New Zealand through the Immigration Department in 1886, consisting of—

	£	s.	d.
133 Fixed Deposits, for 12 months, at 5 per cent =	3,362	19	2
13 „ 6 „ 4 „ =	320	0	0
6 Demand Deposits	69	12	0

The deposits were made in the names of 136 different persons. In the year 1885 a sum of £3,469 15s. 7d. was deposited by 106 different persons.

Remittances to India

41. Various sums, amounting in all to £282 4s 8d., were remitted to India by immigrants in 1886, as against £84 4s. 6d in 1885

Estates of deceased Immigrants.

42. A sum of £43 5s. was collected during the year, representing estates of deceased immigrants, of which £2 3s. 3d. was paid as poundage to the revenue of the Colony, and the balance, £41 2s., placed to the credit of deceased immigrants' estates.

Commutation of indentured service by payment of money.

43. The following male and female adult immigrants terminated their indentured service by repayment to their employers of a portion of the cost of introduction.

	Ex "Berar."	Ex "Poonah," 82	Ex "Poonah," /83	Ex "Bayard."		Total.	
Males,	43	80	4	11	.....	Males,	138
Females,	17	31	9	7	.....	Females,	64
	60	111	13	18	.....		202

Immigrants' letters

44. One hundred and forty-one letters were forwarded through the office by immigrants in the Colony to their friends in India free of cost. Immigrants have not availed themselves as largely of the facilities offered them for correspondence as might have been expected.

Coolie settlement at Watuwaqa

45. It is to be regretted that Indian immigrants show a decided aversion to enter into further contracts of service on the expiration of their original period of indentured service. "The Indian Re-indenture Ordinance," No. IX of 1885, has hitherto proved of little practical utility. It is probable if a bonus was given on reindenture that a considerable number of re-engagements would be effected, but the risk attendant upon the grant of a bonus through mortality or incapacity is held to more than counterbalance any advantages such a system may possess.

With a view to the amelioration of the condition of a certain class of immigrants who, averse to estate labour, inhabited overcrowded and miserable tenements in the town of Suva, the Officer Administering the Government caused a block of land, in the neighbourhood of the township, to be surveyed and divided into a number of one-acre allotments.

Conclusion

46. Before concluding this Report, I would venture to offer my acknowledgments to Dr. Corney for the zealous and careful manner in which he discharged the duties of Agent-General of Immigration during the period of my leave of absence in England.

I have, &c.,

H. ANSON.

Agent-General of Immigration.

Suva Edward John March, Government Printer.—1887.